



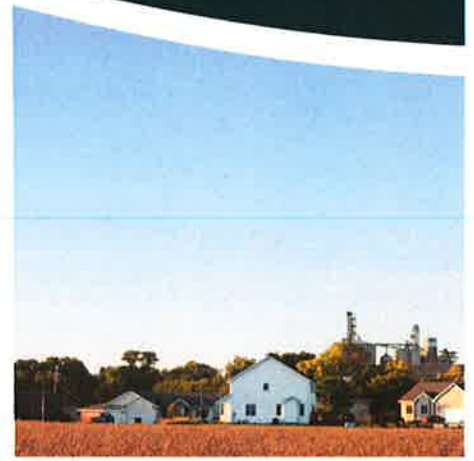
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Rural Development



USDA Rural Development

COLORADO 2015 PROGRESS REPORT





A Rural Economy Built to Last

This has been a year of historic accomplishment for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), particularly in the area of rural economic and community development. In 2015, USDA's Rural Development (RD) employees across the nation have continued to work closely with partners to drive investment in rural small businesses and entrepreneurs; help rural families achieve the dream of homeownership; grow the biobased economy; support renewable energy and efficiency; make critical upgrades to electric, water and telecommunications infrastructure; and expand opportunity in rural communities.

The Fiscal Year 2015 Rural Development Progress Report outlines our work on behalf of hundreds of thousands of projects for individuals, families, farmers and ranchers, rural entrepreneurs and small business owners, municipalities, developers, and utility providers in 2015. Since passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009, which infused billions of dollars into infrastructure and other essential community development projects in small towns across the country, and continuing today through innovative programs authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and executed in collaboration with partners across the public and private sectors, RD has targeted much-needed investment to rural businesses, projects and communities. I am pleased to say that in fiscal year 2015, USDA Rural Development invested \$29.75 billion in nearly 171,000 projects across the nation. Taken with investments made since fiscal year 2009, USDA Rural Development has now invested more than \$224 billion in more than 1.2 million projects in rural communities across the country over the course of the Administration, including 1.1 million direct loans, guaranteed loans and grants to support housing, 11,931 loans and grants to support community facilities, 10,623 loans and grants to support rural water and wastewater services, 2,491 projects to support broadband and rural electric services, and nearly 24,000 projects to support rural businesses and entrepreneurship.

The stories in this year's report illustrate how USDA programs make meaningful, lasting investments in rural communities. For instance, Manning, Iowa — population 1,500 — was named Iowa's small business community of the year by the Small Business Administration in 2015, thanks, in part, to RD investments in entrepreneurs and businesses in the community. In Pennsylvania, Rural Development Business and Industry investments helped a business move its manufacturing back to the United States from China, supporting jobs in the local community. And RD investments in broadband have opened up a world of educational, cultural and commercial opportunities to rural Americans who had been on the wrong side of the digital divide.

These are just a few examples of what investments in rural America can mean in real terms for families and businesses across the country. USDA is proud to lead the Administration's effort to drive investment in rural people and places. This work truly makes a difference in the lives of the proud men and women who live, work and raise families in rural America.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture



Strengthening Rural America, Town by Town

USDA Rural Development transformed lives in small-town rural America in 2015, as we have done throughout our 80-year history.

We are the primary Federal agency responsible for creating opportunities and improving the quality of life in rural areas. Today, there are 46 million people living in rural America who provide the food, fiber, fuel and durable goods the rest of the nation, and the world, depend upon. Consequently, the economic well-being of all Americans is indelibly tied to rural growth. USDA Rural Development investments nurture that growth to fuel the national economy. We are proud to serve the needs of rural people and places to ensure that rural America continues to thrive and to drive the economy. Our investments in rural communities run deep – we manage a portfolio of loans and loan guarantees of more than \$212.9 billion.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, Rural Development invested more than \$29.7 billion in loans, loan guarantees, and grants for a diverse range of worthwhile projects in rural communities. These investments represent the hard work of our employees who strive each day to support the hopes and plans of rural Americans.

For example, we helped grow approximately 12,500 rural businesses through about \$1.5 billion in targeted investments. I had the great pleasure of meeting and spending time with Ijeoma Uwakwe of Wilson, North Carolina, who today owns her own drug store and pharmacy thanks to a Business and Industry loan guarantee from USDA Rural Development and lending partner Southern Bank. Uwakwe, originally from Nigeria, exemplifies the American spirit. She pursued two advanced degrees while raising four children, no small feat. With USDA's help, today, as the owner of a small healthcare business, she is providing high-quality care to her neighbors in the small rural community of Wilson, where healthcare options, and economic resources, are scarce. Her story is just one of many such stories of personal achievements featured in this report, all made possible through USDA Rural Development direct action and competitive financing.

On other fronts, we awarded \$900 million in direct single-family housing loans and made more than \$18.6 billion in loan guarantees to provide homes to more than 141,000 families in rural America.

We also celebrated a major housing milestone in partnership with many of you — 50 years of USDA's Mutual Self-Help Housing Program and 50,000 homes built through it. We were honored to raise walls together with families that are putting in hard work to build their own homes and achieve the dream of homeownership. Through our multi-family loans and grants of \$278 million we helped almost 250,000 households with the construction and rehab of over 10,000 rental housing units.

Through our Community Facilities program, we provided a record level of support — \$1.8 billion — to build more than 970 essential healthcare centers, schools, libraries, public safety facilities and more across rural America. In the tiny agricultural town of Big Sandy, Montana, I visited Big Sandy Activities, a center that helps people who are developmentally disabled build skills that allow them to live and work in the community. This nonprofit started in 1975 and used to be run out of a garage by only two people; Community Facilities funding helped transform it into a specially designed facility that provides a safe and professional learning environment and offers jobs to local residents.

Delivery of high-speed telecommunications and broadband service is another area where USDA Rural Development has shined. Since the start of the Obama Administration and continuing through FY 2015, we have supported new or improved telecommunications and broadband service for 2.8 million rural residents, bringing the world to their doorsteps and opening the door to global e-commerce for rural businesses.

We are particularly proud that loans under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act Broadband Improvement Program have been extremely successful, and offer the potential for exponential rural growth in the future. We have successfully invested nearly \$3 billion in 254 projects in 45 States and territories to deliver high speed Internet to rural areas otherwise unable to acquire service at competitive rates and terms from the private sector. As companies build out these services, 260,000 rural households, 17,500 businesses and 1,900 schools, libraries and health care facilities have new service.

Other 2015 achievements include improving rural electric infrastructure for 5.5 million customers, protecting the health of about 2.3 million rural people through water and wastewater system improvements, and providing more than \$343 million in guaranteed loans and grants for projects to develop renewable energy sources such as advanced biofuels and to make rural farms, ranches, dairies, and rural businesses more energy efficient. Since 2009, USDA Rural Development has supported President Obama's strategy to provide energy that's affordable, clean, and drives innovation through \$2.1 billion in strategic investments for more than 14,000 energy projects nationwide.

I am proud of the difference that Rural Development makes in the lives of real people. In the time that I've been with USDA, I've witnessed this on a very personal level. I watched the townspeople of Floresville, Texas, turn out in force to launch their improved water treatment system. I visited the Peoples Rural Telephone Cooperative in Jackson County, Kentucky, which built a state-of-the-art broadband network that offers locals the same online economic, educational and social opportunities as those enjoyed by urban residents. Each of these investments in rural communities is an investment in our country's future.

USDA Rural Development is a lending agency that cares deeply about the rural people and communities we serve. We are proud to share these stories and successes with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Mensah', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lisa Mensah
Rural Development Under Secretary



Building a Strong and Vibrant Rural Colorado

USDA Rural Development (RD) is the only federal agency devoted solely to assisting rural residents and we take that responsibility very seriously. The numbers speak for themselves. During this Administration, USDA Rural Development has invested \$4.5 billion in rural Colorado! In FY 2015 alone, Colorado RD invested nearly \$645,000,000 in rural Colorado through our affordable housing, business development, and community infrastructure programs. This story is repeated year after year and the results are not only inspirational but life changing.

For example, since 2009 Colorado RD has made the dream of homeownership come true for over 11,000 families and individuals in rural Colorado through our Single Family Housing Direct and Guaranteed Loan Programs. And our home repair loan and grant program has assisted over 300 home owners make needed health and safety repairs.

Over the past eight years, we've also invested nearly \$130 million in rural Colorado through our Business Development programs. These programs assist agriculture producers, rural small businesses, cooperatives, non-profits, and Native American Tribes with a wide array of loan and grant funding opportunities. In the past, these programs have helped ag producers become more energy efficient, provided competitive financing to small businesses and helped non-profits provide technical assistance and develop much needed revolving loan funds in rural communities.

Finally, we've invested nearly \$169 million during this same time in our Community and Infrastructure programs. Our funding has made it possible for hundreds of communities to build, repair and improve their public water and waste collection systems, as well as essential community facilities like medical facilities, senior centers, public safety agencies, libraries and local and regional food systems.

These are just a few examples of the important work that USDA Rural Development is doing across rural Colorado. We are a small agency and most of us live in the communities where we work. We are proud of our rural heritage and we understand the importance of making sure that our rural communities survive and thrive. This annual report showcases the positive work that we're doing each day. I hope you will take the time to review the good work we've done in your community and that you will partner with us to help make rural Colorado's future a bright one.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Trudy Kareus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Trudy Kareus
State Director
USDA Colorado Rural Development

Rural Business and Cooperative Programs

In Fiscal Year 2015, USDA Rural Development invested \$3.8 million in Colorado's rural businesses, supporting 38 projects. Business and Cooperative Programs serve Colorado communities by creating new businesses, growing production, maintaining jobs, conducting feasibility studies, improving rural energy development, creating professional business plans, and increasing revenue for rural business ventures

Business & Industry Loan Guarantees

The B&I Guaranteed Loan program bolsters the existing private credit structure by guaranteeing loans for rural businesses, allowing private lenders to extend more credit than they could typically do. Under the program, USDA Rural Development provides guarantees on loans made by approved lenders that participate in the program. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$1.7 million was invested through this program in Colorado.

Rural Business Development Grants

The RBDG program is a competitive grant program that provides targeted technical assistance, training and other services to help develop or expand small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. The businesses must have fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenues. Grants are awarded to qualified organizations to carry out enterprise- or opportunity-related projects to boost business development. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$221,000 was invested through this program in Colorado.

Intermediary Relending Program

The IRP program provides 1-percent, low-interest loans to local intermediaries that re-lend to businesses for community development projects in rural communities. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$1 million was invested through this program in Colorado.

Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program

The RMAP program awards loans and grants to Microenterprise Development Organizations to

establish revolving funds for micro-loans to "micro-enterprises," or very small rural businesses, and to provide technical assistance and training. The program supports start-up or expansion of very small rural business ventures.

Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants

The REDLG program finances economic development and job creation in rural areas. Under the program, USDA provides zero-interest loans and grants to local utilities to establish revolving loan funds to support local business development projects.



Pictured: Durango Urgent Care in Durango, CO. HMB Holding Company received a Business and Industry Loan to purchase real estate for the care facility. The loan was made in partnership with First Southwest Bank in Pagosa Springs, CO.

Rural Business and Cooperative Programs

Rural Cooperative Development Grants

The RCDG program is a competitive grant program to start or run centers for cooperative development. These centers improve economic conditions in rural areas by helping individuals and businesses start, expand or improve rural cooperatives and other mutually-owned businesses. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$200,000 was invested through this program in Colorado.

Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grants

The SDGG program provides technical assistance to socially-disadvantaged groups through cooperatives and cooperative development centers.

Value Added Producer Grants

The VAPG program is a competitive grant program to help independent agricultural producers enter into activities that add value to their products through new processing and/or marketing opportunities.

Rural Energy for America Program Loan Guarantees and Grants

The REAP program provides loans and grants to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase or install renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$794,364 was invested through this program through grant funds in Colorado.

Rural Energy for America Program Audit and Development Grants

Grantees that receive assistance through this competitive REAP grant program help rural small businesses and agricultural producers by conducting and promoting energy audits, and providing renewable energy development assistance.

Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program

This program provides loan guarantees to develop, construct or retrofit commercial-scale biorefineries so that they can implement new and emerging technologies to support the development of advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals and biobased product manufacturing.

Repowering Assistance Program

This program provides funding for up to 50 percent of the total eligible project costs for biorefineries to install renewable biomass systems for heating and power at their facilities or to produce new energy from renewable biomass.

Advanced Biofuel Payment Program

This program supports increased production of advanced biofuels through payments to producers for finished biofuel products. Colorado had two participants in this program in FY 15, Confluence Energy in Kremmling, CO (pictured below) and Blue Sun Biodiesel in Golden, CO.



Rural Business and Cooperative Programs

Listing of Colorado Business & Cooperative Projects Funded in Fiscal Year 2015:

- Region 9 Development District in Durango: \$9,875 to fund initial planning for Pea Pod's Home Childcare Services to help a centralized company assist home childcare providers obtain and retain licensure.
- Fremont Economic Development in Canon City: \$50,000 to conduct a detailed flood plain study along the Arkansas River.
- Kiowa Economic Development Corporation in Eads: \$37,000 to conduct training and education seminars to help small, rural businesses in a five county area.
- Cloud City Conservation Center in Leadville: \$30,000 to provide technical assistance to area construction contractors to gain energy efficiency best practices and certification.
- Otero Jr. College in La Junta: \$40,000 to conduct training and education seminars to help small, rural businesses in a five county area.
- San Luis Valley Resource Development Group in Alamosa: \$17,125 to complete a broadband study in the area.
- Southwest Ice in Cortez: \$404,000 loan to purchase an existing distribution business.
- HMB Holding Company in Durango: \$1,367,100 loan to purchase real estate where their current tenant Durango Urgent Care is located at.
- Osmus and Welp Farms in Wray: Installation of center pivot irrigation and energy efficiency systems.
- Sangre de Cristo Rural Electric Association in Buena Vista and Tiny Donkey in Cortez: Each received a grant for installation of energy efficient lighting upgrades.
- Marble Distilling in Carbondale: Installation of a geo-thermal and solar array on building.
- Julesburg Farm Market: Installation of energy efficient coolers and refrigerators.
- SCF Inc., the Cactus Car Wash in Montrose: Installation of energy efficiency boilers and lighting upgrades.
- Rocky Mountain Farmers Union in Centennial: \$200,000 RCDG to link food hubs, food co-operatives and other individuals and groups interested in rural food policy by creating a Rural Cooperative Center to provide technical assistance, training and access to capital for food hubs.
- First Southwest Bank in Pagosa Springs: \$1 million IRP loan to provide low-interest loans to businesses and for community development projects in the area.
- James T. Duke, Inc, D&K Real Estate, SCF Inc., Osprey Packs, Inc., Girard Properties, West Building, Southwest Ag, Inc., Wilderness Aware, Inc., Zia II, LLC, and Durango Smoked Meats: Grants for installation of solar panels.

Rural Housing Programs (Single Family)

Rural Development provides funding for single family homes, over 3300 apartments for low-income families and the elderly, and housing for farm laborers statewide. In Fiscal Year 15, USDA RD invested \$328 million in loans and grants to build, purchase, repair and rehabilitate homes across rural Colorado. Thanks to USDA's Rural Housing programs, thousands of rural Coloradoans now either own their own home or have access to safe and affordable housing.

Single-Family Housing Direct Home Loans

This program helps very-low- and low-income individuals and families buy, build and improve homes in rural areas. Payment assistance, a type of subsidy, may be provided for very-low-income applicants — based on their adjusted household income — to help them afford the monthly mortgage loan payments. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$19.7 million was invested through this program assisting 130 homeowners in Colorado.

Single-Family Housing Loan Guarantees (GRH)

This program helps moderate-income individuals and families buy, build and improve homes in rural areas. USDA Rural Development provides guarantees on loans made by approved lenders that participate in the program. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$306.9 million was invested through this program assisting 1,597 homeowners in Colorado.

We would like to congratulate our top producing guaranteed lenders from FY 2015. The following lenders obligated more than \$10 million in SFH guaranteed loans:

- Academy Mortgage Corp.
- AmCap Mortgage
- Bay Equity
- Caliber Home Loans
- Cherry Creek Mortgage Company
- Stearns Lending
- Wells Fargo Bank.

And special recognition goes to **Cornerstone Home Lending** for obligating more than \$20 million in GRH loans in FY 2015.

Single-Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants

This program helps very-low-income rural individuals and families repair, improve or modernize their homes. Grants are provided to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards from their homes. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$260,295 was invested through this program assisting 31 homeowners in Colorado.

Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants

This program provides grants on a competitive basis to qualified organizations to help them carry out local self-help housing construction projects. Grant recipients supervise groups of very-low- and low-income individuals and families as they construct their own homes in rural areas. The group members provide most of the construction labor on each other's homes, with technical assistance from the organization overseeing the project. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$1.1 million was invested through this program in Colorado.



Rural Housing Programs (Multi-Family)

Sol Naciente, Farm Labor Housing Complex in Fort Morgan, CO



Pictured: RD State Director Kareus and Al Gold, CRHDC Executive Director join others for the groundbreaking celebration at Sol Naciente, and construction progress.

Construction continues on Colorado's newest Multi-Family Housing Complex, Sol Naciente in Fort Morgan, CO. The complex was funded in partnership with the Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation. The 50-unit complex will feature both flats and townhouses and is for low-income agricultural workers and their families. The complex will feature a variety of two-, three- and four-bedroom units.

Once complete, the complex will feature a community building with washer-dryer facilities, a classroom, a general gathering space and an office area.

Multi-Family Housing Direct Loans

This program provides competitive financing to construct or renovate affordable multi-family rental housing for low-income, elderly, or disabled individuals and families in eligible rural areas.

Rental Assistance

Rental Assistance payments may be made to owners of USDA Rural Development-financed rural rental housing or farm labor housing apartment complexes on behalf of low-income tenants who are unable to pay market-rate rent to help them meet their monthly rent payments. In FY 2015, \$11.9 million was provided in rental assistance in Colorado.

Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantees

This program provides financing to construct or renovate affordable multi-family rental housing for low- to moderate-income individuals and families in eligible rural areas. Under the program, USDA Rural Development provides guarantees on loans made by approved lenders that participate in the program.

Housing Preservation Grants

HPG grants are provided to sponsoring organizations to repair or rehabilitate housing occupied by very-low- and low-income people in rural areas. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$50,000 was invested through this program in Colorado for two entities: Housing Authority of the County of Conejos and the Huerfano/Las Animas Area Council of Governments in Trinidad, CO. d.b.a South Central Council of Governments

Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants

This program provides financing to develop affordable multi-family rental housing for year-round and migrant or seasonal domestic farm laborers and their families.

Community Facilities Programs

During Fiscal Year 2015, USDA Rural Development invested \$32.5 million on 27 projects throughout rural Colorado utilizing Community Facilities loan and grant programs. Community Facilities programs help build, expand, rehabilitate, and support a wide variety of critical community projects. These include funding for schools, hospitals, community centers, museums, and police and fire facilities that help make our rural communities safer and more competitive, vibrant and resilient.



Groundbreaking for the new Centennial Mental Health site in Fort Morgan, CO. The new center will replace their existing facilities in Fort Morgan and is anticipated to open in late Summer/Fall 2016.

Community Facilities Loans and Grants

This program provides direct loans, loan guarantees and grants to qualified organizations to develop, build and equip essential community facilities in rural areas. Examples of essential facilities include public safety, fire and rescue and telecommunications buildings, schools, libraries, hospitals and health care clinics. In Fiscal Year 2015, 40% of the projects funded were for education and/or safety purposes; 30% were for medical projects, and 20% were for other essential community facilities such as local food systems.

Rural Community Development Initiative Grants

RCDI grants are provided to help non-profit housing and community development organizations support housing, community facilities and community and economic development projects in rural areas. In Fiscal Year 2015, Colorado funded 3 projects totaling \$625,739.



Groundbreaking for Castle Peaks Assisted Living Facility in Eagle, CO. The new 64 unit facility is expected to open in Fall 2016.

Community Facilities Programs

Listing of Colorado Community Facilities Projects Funded in Fiscal Year 2015:

Wiley School District in Wiley: \$13,300 grant for gymnasium lighting.
Crowley County School District in Ordway: \$27,400 grant for library equipment and PA system for the gymnasium.
Costilla County Economic Development Council in San Luis: \$50,000 grant for community kitchen equipment.
City of Florence: \$26,900 grant for purchase of a K-9 police vehicle and body cameras.
Kremmling Memorial Hospital District: \$24,000,000 direct loan to purchase leasehold interest in existing facilities in Granby, Kremmling, and Walden.
Castle Peaks in Eagle: \$500,000 direct loan assisted living facility project cost overruns.
Encore Life, Inc in Wray: \$4,036 grant for equipment (pallet jack, safety vests, cable cutters, and security cameras) at their facility in Wray.
St. Vincent Hospital in Leadville: \$15,000 grant to help with the purchase of an ambulance.
Colorado Community Revitalization in Denver: \$131,480 Rural Community Development Initiative Grant (RCDI) to assist nine low income rural communities with community economic development efforts.
Red Wind Consulting in Colorado Springs: \$244,259 Rural Community Development Initiative Grant (RCDI) to provide capacity building to the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Housing Authority to develop homeless programs.
Mark Ross Montessori in Carbondale: \$700,000 direct loan for cost overruns associated with the construction of a new school building.
Rocky Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary in Keenesburg: \$5,750,000 guaranteed loan to construct an elevated pedestrian walkway, buildout of a new welcome center, parking lot, and new access road.
Centennial Mental Health in Fort Morgan: \$671, 748 direct loan for cost overruns at the new mental health facility.
Eastern Colorado Services for Developmental Disabled in Sterling: \$10,000 grant to purchase two reliable vehicles to update their aging fleet.
Wray Rehabilitation & Activities Center in Wray: \$2,800 grant to purchase two pieces of cardio fitness equipment to replace aging equipment.
Wray Community Hospital District in Wray: \$10,614 grant to purchase a handicapped van to transport patients and residents from the Hillcrest Nursing Facility to outside appointments.
Adult Learning Center—dba Pine River—in Towaoc: \$6,500 grant to purchase 10 new dell latitude computers and a new dell color printer.
Yuma Children's Academy in Yuma: \$2,250 grant to purchase equipment and other items for the child center.
Lewis Fire Protection District in Dolores: \$2,200 grant to purchase a new washing machine.
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe in Towaoc: \$250,000 Rural Community Development Initiative Grant to facilitate the intergenerational coalition building and leadership development training.
Town of Naturita: \$32,000 grant to provide two pick up trucks for the town's public works department.
Cedaredge Community Gardens: \$6,000 grant for improvements to the garden area.
Lands End Fire Protection District in Whitewater: \$12,100 grant to purchase equipment to include radios, laptops, medical supply bags, and other items for the fire district.

Rural Utilities Programs

USDA Rural Development invested \$268.8 million during Fiscal Year 2015 through 20 infrastructure projects to provide reliable and clean drinking water, and to fund waste treatment systems, electric power, and telecommunications services in rural communities throughout Colorado.

Electric Infrastructure Loans

This program provides insured loans and loan guarantees to qualified utility providers to finance construction of electric generation, transmission and distribution facilities and system improvements in rural areas. Funds may be used for demand-side management, energy conservation programs, and on-grid and off-grid renewable energy systems. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$260.8 million was invested through this program in Colorado.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Loans

This program provides loans to USDA electric loan borrowers for energy audits and energy efficiency upgrades that enable the electric utilities to implement energy efficiency service improvements on behalf of their customers. Funds may be used for weatherization, HVAC improvements, high efficiency lighting and conversions to more efficient or renewable energy sources, such as consumer-scale solar power and ground-source heat pumps.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans

This program provides financing to construct, maintain, improve and expand telephone and broadband services in rural areas.

Broadband Direct Loans and Loan Guarantees

This program provides funds to qualified providers to construct, improve or acquire facilities and equipment needed to implement broadband service in eligible rural areas. In 2009, the Obama Administration pushed for, and Congress provided USDA with, an

unprecedented level of funding and five years to connect rural areas to high-speed networks. In Colorado, over \$24 million was invested in six communities statewide through this program. Bringing broadband to these parts of the state has had a significant economic impact on these communities including job growth and better education opportunities.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants

DLT grants help rural communities use the unique capabilities of telecommunications to connect to each other and overcome the effects of remoteness and low population density. For example, this program finances telecommunications equipment and systems that can link teachers and medical service providers in one area to students and patients in another remote location. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$259,248 was invested through this program in Colorado for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The funding will help connect the Ute Mountain Learning Center and the White Mesa Education Center with Utah State University's Blanding campus, Southwest Colorado Community College, and San Juan College in Farmington, New Mexico.

Community Connect Grants

Community Connect grants help deploy broadband service in rural communities where it is not yet economically viable for private sector providers to deliver broadband. Projects funded through the program include community centers that offer free public access to broadband for 2 years.

Rural Utilities Programs

Water and Waste Disposal Program

This program provides affordable direct loans, loan guarantees and grants to build, repair or improve public water systems and waste collection systems in rural areas. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$7.2 million was invested in Colorado.

Solid Waste Management Grants

This program provides technical assistance and training grants to people who operate or maintain landfills to help reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources in rural areas. In Fiscal Year 2015, \$144,084 was invested in Colorado.

Circuit Rider Program

This program provides grants for technical assistance and training to rural water systems experiencing difficulties with day-to-day operations, finances or management.

Pre Development Planning Grants and Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households Grant (SEARCH)

These grants assist low-income communities with initial planning and development of an application for USDA Rural Development Water and Waste Disposal direct



USDA Rural Development Staff (State Director Trudy Kareus, Janice Pond, and Allison Trujillo) join a representative from Encore Life in Yuma, CO for a recycling drop off event.

loan/grant and loan guarantee programs. They can also assist with predevelopment feasibility studies, design assistance and technical assistance on proposed water and waste disposal projects.

Colorado RD is very excited about the partnerships that have been built with several rural communities through funding awarded from these two programs. "We are already seeing full applications coming in for funding from these planning grants to address water and/or sewer improvement needs. We will continue to work with these communities and our funding partners to address their infrastructure needs and assist with economic development," said Janice Pond, Colorado Community Programs Director.

Listing of Colorado Rural Utilities Projects Funded in FY 2015:

Town of Crook	\$30,000 SEARCH Grant for preliminary design, engineering analysis, and the scope of work for a sewer project.
San Luis Ecosystem in Alamosa	\$76,084 Solid Waste Management Grant to evaluate landfill conditions to determine potential threats to water resources. In addition, technical assistance and training will be provided to help Alamosa and Saguache counties reduce their solid waste stream.
Encore Life, Inc. in Wray	\$68,000 Solid Waste Management Grant to help with recycling efforts in Yuma county.
Town of Wiggins	Two \$30,000 grants to fund the pre-development planning costs for a water and a sewer project.
Town of Del Norte	\$4,479,000 direct loan and a \$2,792,796 grant to replace and repair their sewer system.

Colorado Success Stories

Preserving the Local Foods Heritage of the San Luis Valley

A \$50,000 Community Facilities grant made it possible for a Colorado community to promote local foods and encourage natural farming. The Costilla County Economic Development Council wanted to help natural and organic farmers process fruits, vegetables, domestic, and wild game, and increase the availability of fresh, locally produced foods for consumers. The answer was a community kitchen.

USDA Rural Development provided the grant to equip a commercial kitchen, which will be located at the San Luis Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center. The project was also supported through a State grant and a long-term lease for the building from the school district.

Founded in 1851, San Luis is Colorado's oldest town, with a long, rich history of farming and agriculture. Staff at the community kitchen will teach residents the local custom of cooking in outdoor adobe ovens (called hornos) and how to handle and store heirloom seeds. Cooking classes for all ages and genders will be offered. Project leaders are focusing their efforts on school-age children with the hope of nurturing their interest in continuing the food traditions of the San Luis Valley.



The center in historic, downtown San Luis, CO, where the USDA-financed community kitchen will be located.



Keeping health care rural and accessible

Kremmling Memorial Hospital District received a \$24 million USDA Community Facility Loan in FY 15. The loan allowed the district to acquire the existing leasehold interest of facilities in Granby, Kremmling and Walden. By lowering their interest rate, the annual cash flow savings for the district will be over \$500,000 per year, ensuring ongoing financial stability for the hospital.

Lions, Tigers, and Bears...OH MY!

Colorado is home to the oldest and largest wild animal sanctuary in the US. Located 60 miles northeast of Denver, the 720 acre refuge is home to rescued lions, tigers, bears, wolves and other large carnivores from all over the world. In FY 2015, RD staff worked closely with both the Sanctuary and the guarantee lender to put together a CF loan package of nearly \$6 million to allow the Sanctuary to expand their educational opportunities for visitors and to build an elevated pedestrian bridge for animal viewing. The Sanctuary is a draw for tourists and has provided an economic boost for other businesses in the area. As result of the expansion, 20 new jobs will be created at the Welcome Center, which will feature a restaurant, educational exhibits, ticket kiosks, and a gift shop. Additionally, local high school students will also be hired for part time help.



Colorado Funding Totals:

Fiscal Year	2009—2014 Amount	#	2015 Amount	#	Total Amount	Total Award
B&I	\$112,623,304	40	\$1,771,100	2	\$114,394,404	42
IRP	\$2,798,296	7	\$1,000,000	1	\$3,798,296	8
Renewable Energy	\$3,762,705	96	\$794,364	28	\$4,557,069	124
Business Grants	\$2,446,360	52	\$246,000	8	\$2,692,360	60
REDLG	\$2,610,000	5	\$0	0	\$2,610,000	5
VAPG	\$1,629,714	14	\$0	0	\$1,629,714	14
SFH Direct	\$116,853,965	833	\$19,777,103	130	\$136,631,059	963
SFH Guaranteed	\$1,554,039,091	8,884	\$306,930,684	1,597	\$1,860,969,775	10,481
SFH Repairs	\$1,825,219	270	\$260,295	31	\$2,085,514	301
SFH Self-Help Grants	\$4,171,750	8	\$1,115,880	3	\$5,287,630	11
MFH Direct	\$3,163,799	5	\$0	0	\$3,163,799	5
MFH Guaranteed	\$2,004,874	2	\$0	0	\$2,004,874	2
Farm Labor Housing	\$8,424,076	6	\$0	0	\$8,424,076	6
Rental Assistance	\$65,160,432	592	\$11,963,200	111	\$77,123,632	703
CF Direct	\$43,977,733	35	\$25,871,748	7	\$69,849,481	42
CF Guaranteed	\$2,674,837	3	\$5,750,000	1	\$8,424,837	4
CF Grants	\$4,439,687	133	\$846,839	19	\$5,286,526	152
WWD Direct	\$54,827,300	38	\$4,479,000	1	\$59,306,300	39
WWD Guaranteed	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0
WWD Grants	\$22,543,636	48	\$3,239,236	7	\$25,782,872	55
Telecom	\$85,772,405	29	\$259,428	1	\$86,031,833	30
Electric	\$1,763,441,000	32	\$260,849,000	2	\$2,024,290,000	34
All Other Programs	\$3168101	30	\$274,216	9	\$3,442,317	39
	\$3,862,358,275	11,162	\$645,428,093	1,958	\$4,507,786,368	13,120

Rural Housing and Community Facilities Programs

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Single-Family Housing Direct Loans (including Self-Help Loans)	Safe, well-built, affordable homes for rural Americans.	Families and individuals.	Buy, build, improve, repair or rehabilitate a rural home as the applicant's permanent residence.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100% of market value or cost. Loan term of 33/38 years. Applicant may be eligible for payment assistance (subsidy) on the loan.
Single-Family Housing Loan Guarantees	To assist moderate-income applicants/household in buying their homes by guaranteeing loans made by private lenders.	Families and individuals.	Purchase new or existing homes and refinance existing Rural Development guaranteed or direct loans.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	30-year, fixed. The interest rate is negotiated between lender and borrower. Loans up to 100% of market value plus the amount of the up-front guarantee fee being financed.
Single-Family Repair Loans and Grants	To help very low-income applicants remove health and safety hazards or repair their homes.	Families and individuals who currently own their home.	Repair/replace roof, winterizing, purchase or repair heating system, structural repair, water/sewage connect fees, etc.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan and grant.	Loans up to \$20,000 up to 20 years at 1%. Grants available to very low-income applicants 62 years or older unable to pay 1% loan.
Self-Help Technical Assistance Housing Grants	Assist lower-income families in building their own homes.	Non-profits and public bodies.	Technical assistance to help small groups of families to build each other's homes.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
Rural Rental Housing Direct Loans	Safe, well-built, affordable rental housing for very-low-income individuals and families.	Individuals, trusts, associations, limited partnerships, for-profit and non-profit entities, Tribes, public bodies.	New construction or substantial rehabilitation of rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Direct loan.	Up to 100% of total development cost (non-profits); 97% (for-profits); 95% (for-profits with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits). 30-year term with up to 50-year amortization.
Rural Rental Housing Loan Guarantees	Provides loan guarantees on loans to build or preserve affordable housing for very-low to moderate-income tenants.	For profit and non-profit lenders.	Build or rehabilitate affordable rental housing.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Loan guarantee.	At least 25-year term with fixed interest rate. Loan guarantees up to 90% of the principal.
Housing Preservation Grants	Repair and rehabilitate housing owned or occupied by very low- and low-income rural families.	Public bodies and non-profit organizations.	Operation of a program which finances repair and rehabilitation activities for single-family and small rental properties.	Rural areas with populations of up to 35,000.	Grant.	Grant agreement.
Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants	Safe, well-built affordable rental housing for farm-workers.	Individuals, public and private non-profit organizations.	New construction or substantial rehabilitation of rental housing.	Not applicable.	Direct loan and grant.	Up to 102% of total development cost. Up to 33 years to repay at 1% interest.
Community Facilities Loans and Grants	Improve, develop, or finance essential community facilities for rural communities.	Public bodies, non-profits, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes.	Construct, enlarge or otherwise improve essential community facilities, such as public safety, fire and rescue, telecommunications, schools, libraries, hospitals, other health care facilities, etc. This may include furnishings, fixtures and other required equipment.	City, town or unincorporated area of not more than 20,000 in population. Facilities must primarily serve rural residents.	Direct loan, loan guarantee, or grant.	Up to 100% of market value. Term is for useful life of the facility or equipment, the State statute, or 40 years. Maximum grant 75% of project cost. Grant eligibility based on income, population, and need.
Rural Community Development Initiative	To facilitate housing, community facility and community and economic development projects.	Private non-profit or public organizations, philanthropic foundations, low-income communities.	Technical assistance grants of \$50,000 to \$300,000 to develop the capacity and ability of the awardees to carry out needed projects.	City, town, or unincorporated area of not more than 50,000 in population.	Grant.	Matching funds required for grant.

For Direct Loans and Grants, apply to Rural Development. For Loan Guarantees, apply to participating intermediaries such as approved banks, mortgage companies, etc.

Rural Business and Cooperative Programs

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees	Create jobs/stimulate rural economies by providing financial backing for rural businesses.	Lenders/Businesses.	Real estate, buildings, equipment, supplies, working capital, and some debt refinancing.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Loan guarantee.	Lender and borrower negotiate terms. Up to 30 years for real estate, 15 years for machinery and equipment, and 7 years for working capital.
Rural Business Development Grants	Assist the startup or expansion of small and emerging private businesses and/or non-profits in rural communities. Note: This program combines the former Rural Business Enterprise Grant and Rural Business Opportunity Grant programs and was created through the 2014 Farm Bill.	Public bodies, government entities, non-profit entities, and Federally recognized Indian Tribes.	Acquire or develop land, buildings, plants and equipment; build or improve access roads, parking areas, utility extensions, and water and waste disposal facilities; provide technical assistance; establish revolving loan funds; and to support rural distance learning programs that provide educational or job training.	All areas rural in character except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis.
Intermediary Relending Program Loans	Establish revolving funds for business facilities and community development projects.	Public bodies, non-profit corporations, Native American Tribes, and cooperatives.	Community development projects, establishment or expansion of businesses, creation or saving of rural jobs.	Rural areas and incorporated places with populations of less than 50,000.	Direct loan.	The intermediary makes loans to businesses from its revolving loan fund on terms consistent with security offered. Intermediary pays 1% for 30 years.
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program	Establish revolving funds to target assistance to small rural enterprises.	Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs).	Loans, technical, and capacity-building assistance to businesses with 10 or fewer employees and sole proprietorships.	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Loans, grants.	Rural microenterprises apply directly to the intermediary.
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants	Finance economic development and job creation in rural areas.	Rural Utilities Service-financed electric and telephone utilities.	Business startups or expansion projects that create rural jobs.	Rural areas with priority to places with populations of 2,500 or less.	Direct loan or grant to establish revolving loan fund.	Intermediary makes loans to for-profit or non-profit businesses and public bodies. Loans are 0% for 10 years.
Rural Cooperative Development Grants	Establish/operate centers for cooperative development.	Non-profits and institutions of higher education.	Establish centers to provide technical assistance, training, applied research, and collection and interpretation of data, for the purpose of cooperative	All areas except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Minimum 25% fund match (5% for 1994 Institutions). Grants awarded competitively.

Rural Business and Cooperative Programs (continued)

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grants (formerly the Small, Socially Disadvantaged Producer Grant Program)	Provides funds to eligible cooperatives or an association of cooperatives to provide technical assistance to small, socially disadvantaged producers in rural areas.	Cooperatives and associations of cooperatives whose membership and board of directors is comprised of at least 75% socially disadvantaged agricultural producers.	Technical assistance.	All areas, except cities over 50,000 and their contiguous urbanized areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. There is no matching requirement.
Value-Added Producer Grants	Help independent agricultural producers enter into activities that add value to their crops.	Independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, producer groups, majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.	Feasibility studies, business plans; working capital.	All areas.	Grant.	Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Funds cannot be used to build facilities or purchase equipment. Funds must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis.
Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Loan Guarantees and Grants	Provide assistance for energy efficiency improvements or purchase of a renewable energy system for operations.	Rural small businesses and agricultural producers.	Energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy systems, land acquisition and working capital.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000. (Population limits do not apply to agricultural producers)	Loan guarantee and/or grant.	Grants up to 25% of project costs not to exceed \$250,000 for energy efficiency projects and \$500,000 for renewable energy. Loan guarantees up to 75% of project cost not to exceed \$25 million.
REAP Audit/Development Grants	Provide grant to entity to pass through to a small business or agricultural producer for 75% of the cost of an energy audit or renewable energy development assistance.	State, Tribal, or local government institutions of higher education; rural electric cooperatives; or public power entities.	\$100,000 grant to entities, smaller ones to small business and agricultural producers for 75% of energy audit or renewable energy development assistance.	Cities, towns, unincorporated areas with population less than 50,000.	Grant.	\$100,000 to entities and up to 75% of the cost of energy audit for renewable energy development assistance.
Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program Loan Guarantees (formerly the Biorefinery Assistance Program)	Provide loan guarantees for the development and construction of commercial-scale biorefineries or to retrofit facilities using eligible technology for the development of advanced biofuels.	Individuals, Indian Tribes, State or local governments, corporations, farm cooperatives, associations of agricultural producers, national laboratories, higher learning institutions, rural electric co-ops, public power entities, consortiums of any of the entities.	Loan guarantees to develop and construct commercial-scale biorefineries or retrofit facilities to use eligible technology for the development of advanced biofuels.	No restrictions.	Loan.	90% (maximum) guarantee on loans up to \$125 million; 80% (maximum) guarantee on loans less than \$150 million; 70% (maximum) guarantee on loans of \$150 million but less than \$200 million; 60% (maximum) guarantee on loans of \$200 million up to \$250 million.
Repowering Assistance Program	Provide payments to biorefineries to replace fossil fuels with biomass.	Biorefineries.	Grant to biorefineries, including ethanol and biodiesel plants that use electricity generated from natural gas and coal and require this for the fermentation process.	No restrictions.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Advanced Biofuel Payment Program	Provide payments to producers of advanced biofuels.	Eligible producers of advanced biofuels.	Grant to producers of advanced biofuels (non-commercial-based).	No restrictions.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review. Grant awards determined by National Office.

For Direct Loans and Grants, apply to Rural Development. For Loan Guarantees, apply to participating intermediaries such as eligible banks etc. For Revolving Funds (RMAP, IRP, and REDLG), intermediaries apply to Rural Development, others to the intermediaries.

Rural Utilities Programs

	Objective	Applicant	Uses	Population	Loan/Grant	Terms/Conditions
Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grants	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes and non-profit corporations.	Build, repair and improve public water systems and waste collection and treatment systems.	Rural areas, and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Direct loan and grant.	Repayment period is a maximum of 40 years. Grant funds may be available.
Water and Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees	Provide infrastructure for rural areas.	Public entities, Indian Tribes and non-profit corporations.	Construct, repair and improve water supply and distribution systems and waste collection and treatment systems.	Rural areas, and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Loan guarantee.	Eligible lenders obtain up to a 90% guarantee on loans they make and service.
Solid Waste Management Grants	Provide technical assistance and/or training to those who operate and maintain active landfills.	Public bodies, private non-profit organizations, Indian Tribes, academic institutions.	Technical assistance and training to improve landfill conditions and protect against threats to nearby water resources.	Rural areas, and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Grant.	Applications accepted year-round. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Technical Assistance/ Training/Circuit Rider	Provide technical assistance and training.	Public, private, and non-profit organizations.	Provide technical assistance and training to assist with management of water and waste projects.	Rural areas and towns with up to 10,000 population.	Grant.	As funds are available. Complete applications submitted to National Office for review.
Rural Broadband Direct Loans and Loan Guarantee	Deployment of broadband service to eligible rural communities. Note: The 2014 Farm Bill revises program provisions. New rules are expected to be published in FY 2015.	Entities seeking to provide broadband services in rural areas.	Finance the construction, improvement and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service in eligible rural communities.	Refer to the new rules, when available, for population limits.	Refer to the new rules, when available, for loan details.	Refer to the new rules, when available, for loan terms and conditions.
Electric and Telecommunications Loans	Assist rural communities in obtaining affordable, high-quality electric and telecommunications services.	Non-profit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities.	Generation, transmission facilities and distribution of electric power, including alternative, renewable, conservation and energy efficiency programs. Enhance 911 emergency service, digital switching equipment, and fiber optic cable, along with traditional main system telecommunications service.	Electric: areas served by an existing rural electric borrower, or rural areas other than a city or town of more than 20,000. Telecommunications: areas cities with population under 5,000.	Direct loan or loan guarantee.	Interest rates are established in accordance with 7CFR 1714. Contact RUS at www.rd.usda.gov or 1 (800) 670-6553.
Distance Learning and Telemedicine	Development and deployment of advanced telecommunication services throughout rural America to improve education and health care.	Incorporated entities, including municipalities, for-profit, and non-profit corporations that operate rural schools, libraries, health care clinics and other educational or health care facilities.	To provide end-user equipment and programming that delivers distance learning and telemedicine services into eligible areas.	Rural areas outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with populations up to 20,000.	Grant.	Awards range from \$50,000 to \$500,000. A minimum of 15% in matching funds is required.
Community Connect Grants	Provide public access to broadband in otherwise unserved communities.	Public bodies, Tribes, cooperatives, non-profits, limited dividend or mutual associations; corporations and other legally organized entities	To build broadband infrastructure and establish a community center that offers free public access to broadband for two years.	A single community outside incorporated or unincorporated cities with population over 20,000 which does not have broadband.	Grant.	Minimum: \$50,000; Maximum: \$1 million. Amounts are published in Notices of Funding Availability and may vary.

Electric and Telecom Programs: Contact the Rural Utilities Service Administrator; Water Programs: Contact the Rural Development State Office.

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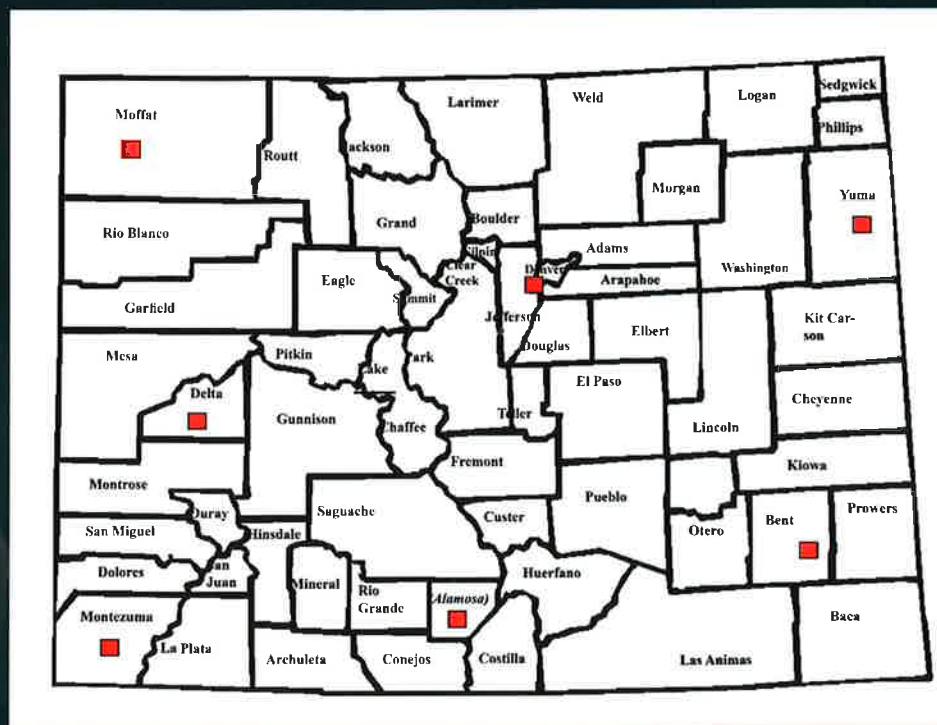
mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
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Rural Development

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